

VZCZCXRO2201  
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHGB #2463/01 2061535  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 251535Z JUL 07  
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2430  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 002463

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2017

TAGS: ECON IZ MOPS PGOV

SUBJECT: BAGHDAD SECURITY PLAN EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE, JULY 13

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Patricia Butenis for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: On July 13, in the absence of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, National Security Advisor Dr. Mowafaq Rubaie chaired the Baghdad Security Plan (Fardh al Qanoon - FAQ) Executive Steering Committee (I-ESC). Key issues discussed included the preparation of new Government of Iraq (GOI) Personal Security Detail (PSD) Regulations, the improvement of Baghdad's fuel supply, and media coverage of FAQ. The meeting was hampered by PM Maliki's absence and was a step backwards in efficiency compared to other I-ESC meetings in recent weeks. End Summary.

Setting a Uniform Policy for GOI Personal Security Details

¶2. (C) National Security Advisor Rubaie congratulated his staff for their work during the week in combining the three previous, and never enforced, sets of GOI PSD regulations into a cohesive set of rules that are ready for approval. (Note: The previous regulations appear to be from: the Iraqi Interim Government under PM Allawi; the Ministry of Defense; and the Ministry of Interior. End Note.). I-ESC members agreed that it was good work, but moved that the new regulations should be voted upon within the Ministerial Council of National Security (MCNS) next week. (Comment: Our PSD procedures are reportedly justified under Coalition Provisional Authority-era guidelines, which elements of the GOI reportedly resent. If universally enforced in Iraq, these new regulations could also potentially significantly impact US Personal Security Details in Iraq. As such, the Embassy, with MNFI, will track this issue through the MCNS. End Comment).

Regulating and Securing Chlorine Shipments

¶3. (C) NSA Rubaie urged the I-ESC to begin a process to move away from an ad hoc approach to a set of uniform procedures for the importation, distribution, and securing of chlorine supplies. Deputy NSA Safah stated that there is currently no lack of chlorine in Baghdad, but he highlighted alleged practices of Jordanian businessmen selling chlorine to known Al Qaeda groups and that proper importation documents were not always enforced. The Governor of Baghdad suggested that all chlorine should be imported into Iraq through the South to reduce security concerns. I-ESC members moved that this issue should be taken up in the MCNS.

Improving Baghdad's Fuel Supply

¶4. (C) Minister of Oil Husayn Shahristani stated that the fuel crisis in Baghdad had gone down in the past week, but that he could not guarantee sufficient fuel supplies to the city. He said that the new battalion to protect convoys coming to the Doura refinery is under formation and has recently been assigned 10 Humvees, but the battalion will take time until it is completely ready. Until that time, Dr. Shahristani stated that he has forbidden the battalion from

being stationed within the Doura refinery compound until they have become fully operational. This battalion has begun performing convoy operations from Kirkuk to Doura. Shahristani indicated that fuel convoys from Bayji to Doura have been suspended because even with the additional to-be-formed battalion, the route is too insecure.

**¶15.** (C) In response to a question from Popular Mobilization committee chair Ahmed Chalabi about "what is the strategic plan of the Oil Ministry to improve the situation," Shahristani stated that his ministry is engaged in several efforts to build, improve and repair pipelines including those that were poorly built by Russian contractors during the Saddam era. Shahristani stated that these efforts would take time and that it was imperative that the Ministry of Defense provide necessary security measures when tasked by the Infrastructure Protection Committee.

**¶16.** (C) Both Minister of Defense Jassim al-Mufriji and FAQ Commander General Aboud indicated that it would be difficult in practice to take security taskings quickly from the Infrastructure Protection Committee because their forces are stretched thin with ongoing FAQ operations. General Aboud highlighted that it takes at least 72 hours to plan any new operations. The defense minister stated that his existing forces are already working side by side with the MNF-I on a variety of existing pipeline security operations, but that protecting such vast distances from attack is very difficult.

The issue is to be further discussed at the MCNS.

#### Tanker Fuel Dispute with Kuwait Update

**¶17.** (C) Oil Minister Shahristani stated that the contract to settle the legal dispute with a private Kuwaiti fuel supply

BAGHDAD 00002463 002 OF 003

company has been sent to the company's legal department and should be finalized soon. \$9.9 million of the payment will come from the Reserve Fund of the Ministry of Finance. \$2.4 million will come from the Ministry of Oil. Although the GOI is making the payment, Shahristani stated that "we have found documents that prove that it is the Kuwaitis who closed the border," and thereby caused the fuel convoys to be held up and fees to accrue.

#### Enacting Rehabilitation of Unused Government Owned Buildings

**¶18.** (C) NSA Rubaie stated that the Office of Deputy Prime Minister Zoubai be given oversight authority on the lagging rehabilitation of unused Ministry buildings in central Baghdad. The Secretary of the Council of Ministers, present at the I-ESC for the first time in more than 5 weeks, disagreed strongly with this proposal, stating that the Council of Ministers is the authoritative body for the issue and has the situation well in hand. Both the NSA and Deputy NSA stated that leaving the matter with the Council of Ministers will take too long. General Aboud again stated the key issue is not whether the buildings are in use or aesthetically pleasing, but that they are secured from use by terrorists and criminals. (Comment. Given the absence of PM Maliki, the issue was left unresolved and de facto remains under the guidance of each individual ministry through the Council of Ministers. It is Post's preference that DPM Zoubai be given oversight. Post is working with the I-ESC Secretariat at the NSA Office to make a monthly progress

SIPDIS

listing of the GOI-determined 19 priority buildings to provide some accountability through the I-ESC. End Comment.)

#### Discussion on Media Activities

**¶19.** (U) Next week marks the 5th month of FAQ. Communications Committee Chair Yaseen Majeed provided a list of suggested upcoming media activities to mark the event and the successes of FAQ. General Aboud complained about the Arab media not

showing progress in Baghdad and commented that he travels to all areas of Baghdad daily and that life in 75% of the city is "regular," noting how cafes that used to close at dark now have patrons until 1 am. Other upcoming media events proposed by Majeed include:

- A special media campaign highlighting the successes.
- A special program focusing on improvements in Ameriyah district.
- An announcement concerning the successful removal of illegal concrete barriers from roads along Abu Nawas Street.
- Appointing a special poet to give a speech about Abu Nawas Street as a means of announcing a proposed future festival and parade there.

¶10. (C) Majeed stated that the media is only covering MNF-I security activities, and this is giving the Iraqi public the view that their own Iraqi Security Forces are doing nothing. UK Lt. General Lamb, attending the I-ESC in the absence of General Petraeus, countered Majeed's assertion that the MNF-I was refusing to allow Iraqi and Arab media to be embedded with Iraqi Security Forces by stating that such activities would be welcome. NSA Rubaie instructed Majeed to coordinate such activities with Admiral Fox, Strategic Effects Deputy DCS for Communications.

¶11. (C) Dr. Chalabi briefed the I-ESC on the results of the interim July 15 US Congressional Benchmark report and stated that the assessment was essentially fair. He stated that it was likely that the international press would be asking for GOI reaction in coming days, and urged the creation and dissemination of a unified response.

¶12. (C) Majeed and Shahristani highlighted the recent increase in International Zone mortar attacks as contributing to a negative public view of the ability of the GOI to improve security in Baghdad. General Lamb responded that the MNF-I is continuously undertaking multi-faceted actions to thwart such attacks and noted that countermeasures are sometimes inhibited by rules of engagement in civilian areas.

Comment on Security Situation for New FAQ Civilian Spokesman

---

¶13. (C) Comment. Post continues to view Yaseen Majeed as ineffective and problematic and hopes to utilize the new FAQ Civilian Spokesman Dr. Sheekly to deliver key media messages to the greatest extent possible. Sheekly, a Sunni living in a heavily Shia neighborhood, has made several useful public press appearances in the past few weeks, but has yet to receive expected personal security protection from the GOI; this is in part because his position is independent and has no allocated budget. In the last week, Post has taken a variety of efforts through DPM Zoubai's Office and the NSA to get the GOI to provide Sheekly with protection. Post is continuing these efforts. End Comment.

BAGHDAD 00002463 003 OF 003

CROCKER